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THE SETTLEMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA AFTER THE WAR.

BY S. C. CRONWRIGHT-SCHREINER.

ONE can decide properly what can justly be done after the war in South Africa only if one knows how the war was brought about. I hold annexation to be wholly unjustifiable. Let me state why I do so.

It is often said that the Transvaal burghers were solidly opposed to granting the franchise to the Uitlanders. That is false. In 1893, the late General Joubert and President Krüger contested the Presidency. The contest was fought on the question of the enfranchisement of the Uitlanders. Mr. Joubert stood for enfranchisement, which Mr. Krüger, like another Lord Salisbury, opposed; and the election was so close that a commission was appointed to re-count the votes, with the result that Mr. Krüger was declared elected by a narrow majority. There can be no reasonable doubt, however, that, but for the Rhodes Plot against the Transvaal and its condonation by the British Government, Mr. Joubert would have romped in an easy winner at the next Presidential election in 1898, and the Uitlander question would have been peaceably settled.

But such a settlement would have left the Dutch in command of the Legislature, as indeed any reasonable settlement must still do; and that did not suit the Capitalists. Everybody now knows that the "grievances" of the Uitlanders in 1895 were simply a stalking horse for the ulterior aims of the Capitalists, with Mr. Rhodes and Mr. Beit at their head. While the inner ring of moneyed agitators, posing as the general Uitlander population,

were appealing to Great Britain about not being enfranchised, while they were clamoring that they wanted a settlement, Dr. Rutherford Harris, Secretary of the Chartered Company, was cabling Mr. Rhodes that there was "great danger" of Lionel Phillips and Charles Leonard (the chairman of the agitators) effecting a settlement "without assistance from the British South Africa Company!"

Just when there was "great danger" of a settlement, the Raid occurred, followed by the gradual exposure of Mr. Rhodes's cowardly and disgraceful plot against the Transvaal, and Mr. Krüger's splendid magnanimity, which compelled the admiration of Mr. Chamberlain, and which extorts a similar note to-day from even so violent a partisan as Sir Sidney Shippard. This was followed by what was much worse. The condonation of the Raid by the British Cabinet convinced nearly every Dutchman and a great many others in South Africa that Mr. Chamberlain was equally implicated with Mr. Rhodes, and that a second "Raid," this time a "constitutional" one, would be made upon the country and the independence of the Transvaal.

Meantime, the Capitalists, determined to carry on the agitation, purchased nearly all the leading newspapers in South Africa,* get their own men appointed as correspondents in South Africa for powerful London dailies, and set about lying to the British public as they did before the Raid. The second agitation, carried on and financed largely by the same men as were responsible for the 1895 agitation, for the same purposes and by the same methods, was, at bottom, as false as that preceding the Raid. But again the inevitable result was to mislead the British public. The agitators were aided by Sir Alfred Milner, who misrepresented South African affairs with a persistence and to a degree surpassing belief, and by Mr. Chamberlain, whom the Dutch universally believe to be in Mr. Rhodes's power by reason of his implication in the plot against the Transvaal.

The result of the continued agitation was that President Krüger and Sir Alfred Milner met in conference at Bloemfontein in May, 1899.

Now, a word as to the status of the South African Republic.

In the 1881 Convention, the Transvaal is styled "The Trans-

*See "How the Press was Worked before the War," by J. A. Hobson, a penny pamphlet issued by the South African Conciliation Committee, Talbot House, Arundel street, Strand, London, W. C.

vaal State," and "suzerainty" is specially retained, the word itself being used. In 1884, this Convention was done away with and a new one drawn up. In drafting the 1884 Convention, Lord Derby with his own hand eliminated the word "suzerainty" and all references to "suzerainty," at the express wish of the Transvaal delegates. In addition, the name of the State was changed from "The Transvaal State" to "The South African Republic," and the new republic thus created was specifically granted absolute independence in regard to its own internal affairs. Successive Secretaries of State have, from their place in Parliament, repudiated all right of interference in the internal affairs of the Republic; among them Mr. Chamberlain, who, in 1896, said that to go to war on such a pretext would be "immoral." Indeed, Mr. Chamberlain himself made the officially recognized status of the Republic quite clear when he, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, defined it in 1896 from his place in Parliament as "a Foreign State which is in friendly treaty relations with Her Majesty." No claim to suzerainty was made from 1884 until the Republic, during the recent negotiations, offered arbitration. This placed Mr. Chamberlain in an awkward position. Mainly through Great Britain, the Republic had been prevented from having a representative at The Hague Conference, and now Mr. Chamberlain did a thing which seems to throw a lurid light upon that action. He revived the claim to suzerainty, and, on the strength of this, refused arbitration! Sir Edward Clarke, the most eminent legal authority on the Conservative side, has expressed the opinion of all sound lawyers in saying that the revival of this claim was not only quite unjustifiable, but was "a breach of national faith."

The South African Republic is thus "a foreign state;" there is no suzerainty, and it has absolute control of its own internal affairs.

Notwithstanding this, "The Lion of Rustenburg," as his burghers style the grim old President, agreed to meet Sir Alfred Milner in a friendly conference. They met at Bloemfontein in May, 1899, Mr. Krüger carefully explaining that the conference was purely a friendly one, and that he recognized no right of interference.

Sir Alfred Milner demanded (1.) a five years' retrospective franchise; (2.) seven seats in the First Raad at once for the Gold

Fields; (3.) one-fifth of the seats in the First Raad as a minimum representation of the Gold Fields for the future.

These demands were unanimously approved of at a public meeting of Uitlanders in Johannesburg, specially convened for the purpose.

Earl Grey, whom I quote because he is now a justifier of the war, wrote as follows in the January number of this REVIEW:

"The demands presented by Sir Alfred Milner, as a minimum of what he would recommend the Uitlanders to receive, were regarded by the common consent of the civilized world as most reasonable and just."

In July, 1899, after various concessions, the Republic passed and embodied in its constitution a seven years' retrospective naturalization and franchise law, which is the law of the land to-day and is actually more liberal and less hedged about with restrictions than the present law of Great Britain. This did not satisfy Mr. Chamberlain, who demanded that a Joint Commission should be appointed to inquire into the law. He, of course, had no right whatever to do this. But, anxious to have the matter settled peaceably, the Republic inquired whether another offer, if made, would be considered on its merits, without prejudice to the seven years' offer, and whether, if such new offer were rejected, the seven years' offer might be reverted to as a basis of negotiations. An affirmative reply was given to both of these inquiries; whereupon on the 19th of August, the Republic offered (1.) a five years' retrospective franchise; (2.) *eight* seats in the First Raad at once for the Gold Fields; (3.) *one-fourth* of the seats in the First Raad as a minimum representation of the Gold Fields for the future.

Coupled with this generous offer (which, knowing intimately the men who made it, I am quite satisfied was made in perfect good faith), the Republic made three stipulations, all of which it had a perfect right to make: (1.) That this should not be taken as a precedent for future interference in its internal affairs; (2.) that the suzerainty should not be further insisted upon; (3.) that other points in dispute should be submitted to arbitration.*

These concessions, it will be noted, actually went beyond Sir Alfred Milner's Bloemfontein demands.

To the amazement of the Republic, this liberal offer was rejected

*It must, of course, be borne in mind that the Republic was prepared all along to submit the whole question between itself and Great Britain to arbitration. I have explained above how Mr. Chamberlain refused arbitration.

on the 28th of August. But worse was to follow; for when, as had been arranged, the Republic reverted to the seven years' offer and acceded to Mr. Chamberlain's demand for a Joint Commission, Mr. Chamberlain, having got all he had required and more than Sir Alfred Milner demanded, actually rejected on the 8th of September the seven years' offer also. This, of course, convinced the Dutch, and many who are not Dutch, that a settlement was not desired by Great Britain, except at the sacrifice of the Independence of the Republic.

Having rejected the generous concessions of the Republic, whose conduct throughout shows a strong desire for peace, Mr. Chamberlain in a dispatch of the 22nd of September said that the British Government would now formulate their own demands. This, of course, was a violation of the Convention of 1884, and an act of war if the Republic chose to interpret it as such. But the Republic still hoped for peace.

Great Britain, however, did not formulate her demands at once, as she should have done. On the contrary, she sent out reinforcements to the troops which for weeks had been increasing in South Africa. As days passed and the expected demands remained unformulated, President Steyn, on the 27th of September, sent a message to Sir Alfred Milner offering mediation. On the 30th of September, the South African Republic itself urgently requested that the proposals should be submitted, that it might have an opportunity of considering them. Again, on the 3rd and 4th of October, Mr. Steyn renewed his proposal. The answer was the calling out of the reserves and the announcement of the despatch of an Army Corps to South Africa. This was on the 7th of October. Two days later, the South African Republic sent its ultimatum, in which, be it remembered, it adhered to the Convention of 1884 and offered arbitration on all questions. On the 11th of October the ultimatum expired, and a state of war existed. Then and only then was British territory invaded. The ultimatum was purely strategic. The Republics were absolutely convinced that Mr. Chamberlain meant war, and, strategically, it was of the most vital importance that they should make the first move. The real act of war was Great Britain's violation of the Convention of 1884, her despatch of troops to South Africa and the calling out of an Army Corps thereupon.

One more incident, which occurred after the outbreak of the

war, must be related to put the finishing touch upon this repulsive tale. On October the 19th and 25th, debates on the war took place in the House of Commons, and on each occasion Mr. Chamberlain was questioned as to the despatch which rejected the Republic's five years' offer. In reply to Sir Edward Clarke and Mr. Leonard Courtney, he said he had intended that despatch to be an acceptance of the offer of the Republic as to nine-tenths of its substance, the remaining one-tenth being only a matter of form and not worth a war. Yet, when the Republic and everybody else interpreted his reply as a rejection, he had made no attempt to put them right!

Now that the war is in progress, the reasons given to justify it before it began have been tacitly abandoned. It is not seriously urged now that the war is about the franchise. *Ex post facto* arguments are urged to justify both the war and the annexation of the territory of the two Republics. The argument almost exclusively relied upon now is that there was a "Pan-Afrikander Conspiracy," which included the Dutch of Cape Colony, to "drive the English out of South Africa." Sir Sidney Shippard, in the last number of this REVIEW, actually uses these ridiculous words. Personally, I know of no evidence to support this allegation of a "conspiracy." I say at once, from my knowledge of Cape Colony and the South African Republic, of both Dutch and English, rural and urban, sections, that there is no truth in it whatsoever. I say, on the contrary, that if the burghers of the Transvaal, without provocation, had invaded the Cape Colony, they would have been met and opposed, gun in hand, by the Dutch of the Colony. If personal testimony be not sufficient, the following facts quite dispose of the "conspiracy" allegation.

1. During the period which this "conspiracy" is supposed to cover, Mr. F. W. Reitz, then Chief Justice of the Orange Free State, now State Secretary of the South African Republic, when offered the Presidency of the Free State, in turn offered it to Sir George Grey, the greatest of England's Pro-Consuls.

2. Sir Gordon Sprigg has been Premier of the Afrikander Bond Party during the same period, and Mr. Rhodes was its most trusted Premier up to the end of 1895.

3. In 1895, before the Raid, the Cape Colony and the Free State were prepared to support Great Britain in war against the South African Republic.

4. In 1896, the Raads of the two Republics passed resolutions asking Great Britain to abrogate the Charter and govern Rhodesia under direct Imperial control, while the Bond in the Cape Colony passed a contrary resolution.

5. During the Matabele war, after the Raid, Mr. Krüger offered to send his burghers to help to quell the rising in Rhodesia.

6. In 1897, there was a spontaneous and enthusiastic outburst of enthusiasm among the Dutch throughout the Cape Colony on the occasion of the Queen's Jubilee.

7. In 1898, the present "Bond" ministry of Cape Colony brought in and carried unanimously a vote of £30,000 a year for the British fleet, and handed over Simon's Town, the most important fortified naval station in the Southern hemisphere, to the Imperial authorities, the Dutch in Cape Colony outnumbering the non-Dutch in the proportion of about three to two.

8. Before the outbreak of the war, over two hundred meetings, representing the whole Dutch population of Cape Colony, were held in favor of peace. A petition to the same effect was signed by the Afrikaner women and sent to the Queen.

9. The Cape Colony Dutch did not rise on the ultimatum and have not yet risen, although their doing so would have more than doubled the forces against us and placed the whole of South Africa, with the exception of three or four towns, in the hands of the Dutch. It is calculated that the Cape Dutch could have added 70,000 to 80,000 fighting men to the 50,000 of the two Republics, all good horsemen and good shots. It is in fact the much maligned Dutch of the Colony that have saved South Africa for the Empire.

10. The "Bond" Ministry of Cape Colony remains to-day in office, representing Dutch opinion. It has called out all the Colonial Volunteer and police forces and handed them over absolutely to the Imperial authorities, together with our railways, telegraphs, etc.—all of which the Dutch have been taxed to form and build and are to-day being taxed to maintain.

To speak of a Pan-Afrikaner conspiracy in the face of such facts is simply nonsense.

I hold it to be clearly established that the reasons given for the war, both before and after its beginning, are quite insufficient to justify it. It is, indeed, stupid to urge that the war is for a franchise, when the franchise law of the Republic is more liberal

than that of Great Britain. It is equally stupid to urge a Pan-Afrikaner conspiracy in face of the facts here adduced. This being the case and no other reasons being forthcoming that can stand examination, Great Britain is waging an unjust war. Her attitude is dishonorable and cowardly throughout. War has been forced on the Republics. They did not want war: the great efforts made by the Free State to induce the Transvaal to give concessions, and the concessions given by the Transvaal, prove this. It is absurd to suppose that a handful of farmers should seek war with the greatest Empire in the world. There was one thing, however, they would not surrender without a fight—their dearly loved independence. Having given even more than they could have been expected to give, and seeing then that Great Britain meant to take their independence from them, they said, like men, that they would not surrender their independence without fighting for it.

I have not time in this article to go into the causes that produced the war. I hold it can be proved to be a war brought about by capitalist influence. Indeed, Mr. Hobson's book, *The War in South Africa*, proves this pretty conclusively. I wish now to draw attention to the fact that Lord Salisbury, Mr. Chamberlain, the Duke of Devonshire, and many other leading British statesmen, as well as Sir Alfred Milner, repeatedly and explicitly stated that Great Britain had no designs upon the territory of the Republics and no desire or intention of depriving them of their independence. They said they were going to war simply to secure an equitable franchise, which would enable the Uitlanders to become enfranchised and work out their own salvation. Yet when the war is once in progress, what do we find? Mr. Chamberlain has made an official declaration that the Republics are to be annexed, and to be governed either by a military council or as Crown Colonies! All along, a great many people, including all the Dutch of South Africa, have said that the declared intentions of Great Britain were false, and that what she really wanted was to destroy the South African Republic and steal its territory, which included the largest and richest gold deposit in the world. Her intentions, as declared by Mr. Chamberlain to-day, go far to prove the truth of the accusation. She stole the Kimberley diamond mines in the most barefaced manner from the Orange Free State; now, after killing its citizens, she is going to steal the gold mines

of the Transvaal. Having set out professedly to put an end to an "oligarchy," she is going to institute an autocracy; having set out to enfranchise people, she is going to disfranchise everybody; having set out to make a true republic of the Transvaal, she is going to govern it and the Free State by a military despotism; having set out to spread freedom, she is going to curtail it. Great Britain stands before the world, dishonored and unashamed!

Morally, she has no right whatever to "annex." But the moral principle is scornfully flouted by Sir Sidney Shippard, as by so many other "Imperialists." In the "higher politics," he says, "enlightened selfishness is and must be the only true guide."

Well, I will discuss the question on the low ground which these "Imperialists" understand, and show that, in this case, even on the purely material side, the "selfishness" which departs from the moral principle will not be an "enlightened selfishness."

In the whole of South Africa south of the Zambesi, there are about 800,000 whites, of whom about 440,000 are Dutch, 270,000 British, and 90,000 non-Dutch and non-British. So that, throughout South Africa, the Dutch outnumber the British by 170,000. This numerical superiority is certain to be increased, for the Dutch are the stable population; they are on the land throughout the whole area; they cannot be displaced and they are remarkably prolific. On the other hand, the population of the mining centres, although it may obtain a temporary accession, must eventually decrease. For instance, as the mining and commercial interests of Witwatersrand fall into the hands of or become dominated by the amalgamated or associated great Mining Companies, as wages are reduced, black labor substituted for white, and the compound system introduced, the population of Johannesburg will inevitably decrease, just as that of Kimberley and Beaconsfield fell nearly forty per cent. within only a few years after the amalgamation of the mines and the introduction of the compound system under the De Beers Company. The numerical superiority is, indeed, actually larger to-day than the figures given indicate, for there has been considerable intermarriage between "Afrikanders" (Dutch and British South Africans), and, almost without exception, all people with any Dutch blood are on the Dutch side, which, in addition, is further strengthened by many non-Dutch who sympathize with the Dutch as brother South Africans, and love South Africa as they do.

Now, the whole of the Dutch population throughout South Africa, besides many others, regard the war as having been forced on the Republics by capitalist intrigue, and as most cruel and unjust; they do not blame the British nation primarily, who they still say are a just people that have been misinformed and misled into a great crime—a crime that they would never have permitted had they known the truth. They feel thoroughly outraged and hold with the utmost intensity that there is no justification whatever for “annexing” the Republics, especially after their heroic fight. This feeling is held with equal intensity by the Dutch of the Cape Colony, who, though British subjects born under the British flag, have been overridden, insulted and outraged under martial law in a manner passing belief, simply because they are of Dutch descent.

Now, if Great Britain annexes the Republics, what will the result be? I am firmly convinced that the result will inevitably be that, at no very distant future, she will permanently lose South Africa. She will weld the Dutch (who, as I have shown above, were split in 1895) into one solid people. This in itself is a desirable end. But she will, by her wicked and fatuous policy, make that solid people, the South African majority, hostile to her. She will permanently alienate South African sentiment. The Dutch are the bulk of the young South African Nation: they will not only increase rapidly and more and more dominate the country, but they will gradually be joined by ever increasing numbers of British South Africans, who share with them a profound love for South Africa as their mother country, who hold that South Africa must be left severely alone to manage her own internal affairs, and who resent this criminal war as hotly as the Dutch themselves do. The crimes and wrongs perpetrated in South Africa to-day are perpetrated against the South African People, as more of us will from time to time recognize. Great Britain is running her foolish head full tilt against the young South African Nation. If she persists in her mad policy, she will make that people hostile; and this will inevitably lose her South Africa. It is a most unstatesmanlike policy to alienate the affections of the South African people. It has taken some 240,000 of Great Britain’s picked troops, many weary months, and some £200,000,000* to subdue the 50,000 warrior peasants of the Republics. If she pursues a policy which alienates her own

*The estimated cost to the conclusion of the war.

subjects, the next time South Africa takes the field it will be with at least 130,000 men, for the Cape Dutch can put from 70,000 to 80,000 in the field, every one of whom is a good rider and a good shot, and there will be others besides Dutchmen. In that case, Great Britain would need some 400,000 men to subdue the country and some years to do it in, if, indeed, she could do it at all. If such a rising occurred while Great Britain was engaged in a life and death struggle, say with Russia, she could not spare the men; she would lose South Africa.

What, then, is she to do? The answer is, *She must not annex.* She must stand honorably to her declared intention that "she sought no gold fields, she wanted no territory," but only an equitable franchise. If she stands honorably to this, she will nullify the accusation that she only wanted "to paint the map red."

Putting aside the native question for the moment, as too large and important to be cursorily treated of now, she might, I think, do three things:

(1.) Take complete control of the external relations of the Republics;

(2.) Fix a clear five years' retrospective franchise for both States, and place the Dutch and English languages on an equality;

(3.) Insist upon disarmament as to big guns and forts. Rifles should not be touched, and sufficient cannon (of size and number to be fixed) should be allowed to quell the native risings.

Having done this, and having placed a British resident at each capital, she should leave the country alone. South Africans are quite capable of managing their own affairs. It is Great Britain's fatuous interference from time to time that has caused nearly all their troubles. South Africa will become a nation. Its attitude to Great Britain will depend upon how Great Britain treats it now and in the near future. Her policy should be to regain the strained and lost affections of South Africans. That can only be done by leaving South Africa internally free and doing the just thing now. If Great Britain goes back on her pledged imperial word and annexes the Republics, she will lose South Africa. An "enlightened selfishness" will be found to lie in the direction of an honorable fulfilment of moral obligations, not in that disregard of ethical principles advocated by Sir Sidney Shippard.

S. C. CRONWRIGHT-SCHREINER.